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RECENT REVIEWS

Ancient Creatures

“**Salem Press** has published a single-volume work entitled *Ancient Creatures* that concentrates on “the 100 most studied prehistoric creatures in educational curricula today.” Edited by **Spencer G. Lucas**, this book offers individual articles on each creature covered as well as critical essays that focus on topics like biological classifications, major eras in paleontology, extinctions, fossilization, and dinosaur intelligence.

Of course the bulk of the volume is devoted to articles that discuss the prehistoric creatures themselves from the Allosaurus to Zephyrosaurus. These essays are grouped together by eras ranging from the Permian to Middle Jurassic to the Late Cretaceous. Each essay starts with an introduction followed by a discussion of the creature’s biological classification, anatomy, intelligence, reproduction and population, diet, behavior, habitat, and current research. The essays are informative and answer key questions about these ancient creatures in a factual and well organized fashion. One of the highlights of the book is the illustrations and sidebars that not only give readers an idea of what the creatures may have looked like, but also provides visuals that offer information on measurement and size, classification, fossil location, time periods and key vocabulary. Each entry also has a solid bibliography of books, journal articles, and Websites that students will find useful in expanding their research.

Ancient Creatures will appeal to the upper division high school students and undergraduates for which it was designed. Logically organized and accessible with informed essays reflecting current theories based on the fossil record, this volume discusses the prehistoric creatures that most students are most interested in. While some libraries may want to place it in reference, it is equally appropriate for circulating collections. Given the online access provided by Salem to libraries purchasing their print titles, utilizing the eBook as the reference copy while placing the print version in circulation is a good strategy.”

- *Against the Grain*, June 2015 Issue

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